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Pastoral Advice,
WITH
MEDITATIONS
AND
PRAYERS:

Recommended to the
Serious Consideration & Practice
OF HIS
PARISHIONERS.

By T. A. M. A. Vicar of BURBAGE.

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L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by Joseph Downing in Bartholo
mew-Close near West-Smithfield, 1712.

Pastoral Advice,
 W. I. T. H.
 MEDITATIONS
 AND
 PRAYERS:

Recommended to the



Serious Confession
 OF THE

PASTORAL ADVICE

BY T. A. M. A. V. M. OF BARRINGTON

LONDON

Printed and sold by J. G. D. in London.
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THE PREFACE.

THAT the Design of God in our Creation was to create us to a happy blessed State, is a Truth not only graven on our Hearts, but also confirmed by Revelation; wherein such excellent Characters are given of us, consider'd in our original Nature and Design, that they, to whom God has pleas'd to reveal it, were dazzled with the Glory of it, and express themselves with the greatest Wonder and Amazement, at God's vouchsafing to bestow such Majesty and Honour upon us.

And since we, by debasing the Affections of our immortal Souls, have effaced the glorious Image, and are fallen from the Happiness we were created in, God, whose Love to his Creatures is as an inexhaustible everflowing Spring, has been continually labouring to renew this Image in us, and to reinstate us in our original Glory: The mysterious and astonishing Method of which Design is, from its Beginning to its Consummation, contain'd in the holy Scriptures, those inestimable Treasures of Truth, wherein the attentive Reader will find an Account of our original Nature, what we were when we came forth of our Creator's Hands; how we fell from that blessed State; what were the sad Effects of our Fall upon our selves, and the Creatures of this lower World; how, and by whose Mediation the Miseries of it were in Part relieved and mitigated; and also by what Means the Divine

and Blessed Image may be renewed, and we, poor depraved Creatures, recover the lost Happiness and Glory.

Which Things are of an Importance and Concernment so divinely comfortable and refreshing, as should, we might reasonably hope, fill the disconsolate Regions of the fallen World with Joy and Praise, disposing every Creature in it to bear the Sufferings of their present State with Patience and Resignation, in Hopes of the promis'd Redemption; and that groaning after the glorious Revelation of it, we should, with a willing Mind, submit to practise such Rules of heavenly Discipline, as the Spirit of God, who thoroughly knows our Nature, thinks fit to prescribe, in order to renew the effaced Image in our Hearts, and receive, with Joy and Gratitude inexpressible, all those heavenly Lights whereby we are directed in the lost Way of Happiness and Peace.

But whoever reads the holy Scriptures with a sincere Desire to know himself, will soon be deeply sensible of the miserable Degeneracy of our Nature: What ignorant, frail, disobedient Creatures Sin has made us, so strangely alienated in Heart and in Affection from the Life of God, that hard, extreme hard it is to conquer our Obstinacy and Perverseness. For tho' God, in infinite Pity, has graciously undertaken our Redemption; and, in order to renew us to our original Form, has condescended to become our Teacher and Instructor; training our Souls by Laws and Indulgencies suited to the Infirmary of our State; tho', to keep us from Extravagance and Folly, he has hedged us about by Promises and Threatnings, bearing with the Sins and Follies of his backsliding Creatures, as a Father with his beloved Children, in order gradually to alter and subdue that Form of Contrariety and Unlikeness to the Divine Image, which we, by Disobedience, wear, and to renew the heavenly Impression on us; yet we have frustrated the most gra-

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cious Methods and Designs, profaning the Ordinances of God, so as to make him abhor his Institutions, reject his peculiar People, make 'em Examples of his Vengeance to all the World, as is the present Lot of the Jewish Nation, and seek after a People among them who did not know him.

And whether we, poor Christians, planted on the Ruines of the Jews, are not, by our great Abuses of God's Graces, ripe for the same or more terrible Judgments to be display'd upon us, deserves to be seriously consider'd and laid to Heart. Whoever reads the inspired Writings, must needs be apprehensive of a no less general Revolt from God among us, Christians, than was among the Jews. Where an Account is given, not only of the future Apostacy of Christians, but also how, and by what Means this Evil should gradually grow upon us; and what terrible Judgments it would, when the Time of Patience and Long-suffering was expired, bring down, provoking the most Gracious God to cast us off, as he did the Jews: Which Things, how far they are advanced upon us, we need only compare our present State with the Descriptions the Scriptures give of the latter Times, to conjecture.

It is too sad a Truth, that we generally do not only come short of the Holiness our Religion does require, but want even the Qualifications preparatory to it. He who enters into the Christian School, should be inwardly convinc'd of his strange Unlikeness and Contrariety to God, be griev'd at, and loath it as a vile and nauseous Thing; acknowledge the Incapacity of his natural Powers to renew himself; and renouncing all Power and Activity of his own, sincerely beseech the good Spirit of God, to enable and assist him in it; otherwise, while he thinks himself a great Proficient, he will be found to know nothing at all; ignorant of the very Rudiments of Christianity, and may expect to hear hereafter from our Saviour's Mouth, those killing Words, Depart, I know you not.

To be ignorant, that we are naturally in a very depraved, polluted State; that our whole Soul is plung'd in Darkness and Disorder; that all its Powers are fetter'd and bound up; that its Conceptions, Desires, Affections, are extravagant, wild, irregular, is to know just nothing at all. The sincere Christian therefore thinks thus of himself, and humbly proposes the Redressing the Irregularities of his Nature, by faithful and fervent Prayer to Him alone who is able to bring Light out of Darkness, and Order from Disorder: To which End, he resigns himself, with all Humility of Soul, to the Discipline of God's Spirit, persevering constantly in the Practice of Self-Denial, Penitence, &c. by Means hereof, to mortify and subdue the Body of Sin that lives and acts within him. To convince us that we naturally are born in this Contrariety to God, and to restore upon us his blessed Image, was the great Endeavour and Design of the Author of our Faith, and that which he still is carrying on by the Ministry instituted in the World; to which, whosoever is call'd, if he be faithful to his Lord and Master, and to the Interests of Mens Souls, must inculcate on Mankind the Corruption of our Nature, and Necessity of being renewed by Repentance; he must be endued with a generous universal Charity and good Will, lamenting the Misery of all God's Creatures, and ready to assist and do Good to all: He must seek God's Glory, and the Salvation of his Creatures, thro' evil and good Report, through Honour and Dishonour, returning Good for Evil, and Prayer for Persecution: Which noble Charity, is indeed the true Image of God, the most amiable Likeness and Resemblance of Him, who causes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall on both the Good and Evil; for the Exercise whereof, the Spirit that now reigns in the so call'd Christian, will afford but too many Occasions, as I have, by my own Experience, sufficient Reason to affirm.

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The internal Feeling and Conviction of our Corruption is, as I said, the first Qualification of a Christian; and it shows it self by stirring us up, to use ardent Prayers unto God, the Fountain of Holiness and Virtue, to change and renew our Hearts, and voluntarily to submit our selves to the holy Discipline of Perfection, taught by Jesus Christ; whence one may evidently judge of the present State of Christians, who are so far from having this Conviction and Weariness thereof, that they hug and cherish their vile Corruptions; they ridicule and persecute the Christian Life, and abhor its holy Discipline.

If we may depend on the Judgment of Men of the soundest Piety and Experience concerning the State of the Christian World, its Manners are become so very scandalous and corrupt, that their Virtue will be found to be but light, tho' weighed in a Ballance against the Heathens; who, as they tell us, act with more Honesty, Truth, and Justice, and all sorts of Virtue, than we Christians do; which, tho' eternally reproachful to us; nevertheless, God's Justice is wonderful and adorable, in abandoning to greater Abominations them, who render greater Lights and Graces useless to them: And a Learned and Right Reverend Author has lately told us, that without somewhat Extraordinary from above, the present Generation is so stupidly ignorant and miserably depraved, that there is little Hope left of doing much Good on it; and with him I heartily pray, for the rising Generations. God grant that they may see and deplore the Transgressions of their Fathers; and returning to the forsaken Paths of Holiness and Truth, may, by a lively Piety and Zeal for God, avert the Wrath that is kindled against us. God grant that they may not multiply Judgments by their Sins; and by an Increase of Impiety, Profaneness, and impudent Defiance of God and Virtue, constrain them, who have Zeal for God, and for the Edification of Souls, to

retire from Publick Duties, as a necessary Means to preserve the Integrity of their Conscience: Which, that it may not seem to be a groundless Apprehension, I proceed (my good Reader) to acquaint thee with the Treatment which I my self have, in the Course of my Ministry, received from them among whom the Providence of God hath plac'd me, to whom the ensuing plain Discourse was deliver'd in a Sermon; but by Reason of the Method therein observ'd, is publish'd by the Title of PASTORAL ADVICE, &c. and though, by Reason of some particular Ways of Dealing too much used, or rather abused by them, the World is not perhaps every where so highly spirited in Diabolick Qualities; yet my own Observation, and the general Complaint of good and pious Men assures me, that this wicked Spirit of Profaneness, Liberty, and Defiance, does every where get Ground.

That the grand Endeavour of a Christian Pastor should be to renew, in the degenerate World, the effaced Image of God, and establish his Kingdom in the Hearts of Men, I have taught, and do sincerely believe; and have therefore principally endeavour'd to convince the Souls committed to my Charge, of their natural Alienation from, and Enmity to God; and of the Necessity of being renewed in the inward Man. I have taught 'em by what Effects and Signs Men ought to judge to whom they do belong; pressed them to be redeem'd from the Dominion of corrupt Nature and the Devil; and by Repentance, and forsaking their unchristian Ways, to prepare their Hearts for the Spirit of God, to produce in them the Fruits of Meekness, Humility, and unfeigned Love towards one another: I did inculcate, that the Christian's Aim should be, to add Virtue to Virtue, that the Man of God might, at last, be perfected in Piety and good Works; exhorting them to press toward the Mark of their holy Calling. I observed their Ways of Living,

and their Occupations, and to what Sins they were more especially expos'd by them, cautioning against them, in my Sermons, with a Spirit of Charity and Meekness, and giving such Exhortations and Instructions as seem'd to me most proper, to deliver 'em from mean, ignoble, selfish Ends and Purposes; and teach 'em to propose God's Glory, and the Happiness of their Fellow-Creatures, and so to act as did become Men who ordain their Actions to that blessed End. I have prayed to God, that in preaching his Laws, I might not be influenced by Fear of Men, or Respect of Persons; but do it with Plainness, Simplicity, and Truth.

But, as our Saviour tells us, they whose Deeds are Evil, do hate the Truth, which reproves their wicked Lives; and tho' he, who tempers the Laws of Christ to Mens Passions and Inclinations, let him come in what Name, or pretend to what Authority he will, is one of those false Prophets of whom our Saviour bids us to beware, Mat. VII. 14. Yet such are more acceptable to our present Christians, than they who teach 'em to take the Kingdom of Heaven by a holy Violence to their Passions and Inclinations. All Men pretend to desire the Salvation of their Souls, but will seek it their own Way, and not in the Way taught by Jesus Christ. They are for reconciling God and Mammon, and love them who make Religion consistent with their covetous and voluptuous Desires: The same worldly, proud, spiteful Temper reigns in the World now, as it did in the Days of Jesus Christ, and when opposed, will break out in the same rough, opprobrious, violent Measures; of which, it has pleas'd the all-wise Providence of God to make me, in some Measure, sensible by my own Experience, in Affronts and Abuses from some, for whose Happiness and Salvation I could be content to die, I believe, scarce to be parallel'd in a Christian Countrey; who, to render me odious, make no Conscience what they speak or do;

and

and publish, concerning me far and near, Characters which, I hope, I dread the deserv'd Imputation of; more than Death; as of Lying, Deceit, Slander, Injustice, Oppression, Sliness, Cunning, and even of incorrigible Wickedness, vilify my Person, ridicule my Words and Actions; call my Sermons, Lies; and myself, even while I preach, and in the House of God, an aggravating Devil. And, after having dress'd me in these odious Colours, as the Heathens of Old did the Christians in the Skins of wild Beasts, to enrage the Fury of others against 'em, cry out, Away with such an One, no Matter what becomes of him. Under which contumelious Usage, it affords me no little Comfort to reflect, that, as a Lover of God and of his Creatures, I have sought their Happiness and Salvation as my own; persuaded them to redeem their Souls from the Dominion of Avarice, Lust, Envy, Malice, and other damning Sins; spoken the Truth plainly, without Respect of Persons, and been perhaps more particular in my Applications, than the pride and corrupt Hearts of some could bear; convincing them, that the Ways and Courses of which the Consciences of too many accus'd them, were as contrary to the Religion of Jesus Christ, as Light is to Darkness; and that, without Amendment of Life, their Case was desperate: And therefore am I treated as the worst of Men; a Man not fit to live. And as, I do solemnly declare, I know no other Reason; so I do believe my Conversation hath been such, that my Enemies can give no other, than that I have been vigilant of their Lives; and, as Occasion did require, given friendly Cautions to them, in whom I have discover'd Injustice, and other Sins; and have conscientiously endeavour'd to hinder and suppress Vice and Immorality; more particularly that at a Visitation Court lately held among us, I advis'd privately with the Visitors, what Course to take with a Woman, whose lewd Character gave Scandal to all sober, virtuous

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Persons: Whereupon they thought fit to mention it to the Church-Wardens, one of whom was said to be too familiar with her, [and considering his wicked spiteful Behaviour to me ever since, I fear too truly,] and to admonish them of their Duty, which, instead of doing, this wicked Man filled with Anger, Revenge, Spight, and such like Passions, as are the inseparable Furniture of a base, profane, and lustful Soul; to which, if such are abandoned, whose whole Glory and Delight is in resolute Swearing, and filthy Discourse and Actions, this Man may be said to be so; supposing me the Author of the Information concerning this young Woman, proceeded, on this Conjecture, to publish it for certain, and by a bold and saucy Liberty, to embolden by Lies and Calumnies against me, not only such as were engaged in Intrigues with this scandalous Woman, but also all others whom, by a conscientious Discharge of my pastoral Duty, I had at any Time offended; as they who will be faithful to God, and to the Interests of Mens Souls, cannot in this wicked World avoid. On which Account, I am become the Mark at which wicked Men let fly their Arrows; Men fix upon me not this, or that, but say all kind of Evil of me, to bury my Name in Infamy and Reproach. Even Men who hate and revile each other; even Men who make no Conscience of their Ways; even they who live in Whoredom and Adultery, who watch Opportunities to oppress and defraud, as a Kite to catch his unwary Prey; they who not only do vile and abominable Things, but even glory in them; they who have been by me detected of Fraud and Robbery, in Things of a sacred Nature and Relation; and which is yet, if possible, more vile, even they, to preserve whose Families from Infamy and Shame, I have exposed myself to the Revenge and ill Will of Men burning in Lust, have wickedly link'd themselves, even with those Men who have made their Families vile by infamous Reports.

Sach

Such were my Circumstances when the ensuing Advice was deliver'd in a Sermon, which I hoped might help to compose 'em to more sober Manners; tho', instead thereof, many were offended at it; and some who need, but hate to be reformed, have reveng'd it on me with a great deal of spiteful Treatment. Under all which contumelious Usage, I am very sensible what need I have of Assistance from above, and will therefore turn my Eyes towards my Lord and Saviour, and, with Humility and Faith, beseech Him to support me by his Blessed Spirit: And tho' to see with what Activity and Zeal the Men of this wicked World unite in fulfilling the Will of the Ruler of it, does give me melancholy Reflections; yet, from these Events, I will raise my Thoughts to the adorable Providence of God, which orders and disposes all Things wisely, and will make even the Sins of Men subservient to his Glory. Having several Motives to publish these Papers, I have, to make them more useful unto them, for whose Benefit they are principally design'd, added a Meditation and some Prayers. I conclude, beseeching our infinitely wise and gracious God, to pardon the Sins of me, his most unworthy Servant, and to bless the ensuing plain Advice, that it may be instrumental in converting some from the Disobedience of their Ways to the Wisdom of the Just.

Prov.

Prov. IV. 10, 11, 13, 14.

Hear, O my Son, and receive my Sayings, and the Tears of thy Life shall be many. I have taught thee in the Way of Wisdom, I have led thee in right Paths. Take fast hold of Instruction, let her not go, keep her, she is thy Life. Enter not into the Path of the Wicked, and go not in the Way of evil Men.

THAT my Discourse on the Text may be more generally useful and instructive, I will endeavour to address it to you in the most plain and easy Method, consisting only of such practical Instructions for ordering your Conversations, as will naturally meet every Man, who reads the Text in the Fear of God, sincerely desiring his Holy Spirit to teach him the true Understanding of it: And that these practical Rules may find a more easy Entrance into your Heart and Conscience, I will, as an Introduction to them, remind you of a very great and important Truth or two, which you have been often taught, (*viz.*) 1st, That Sin is the only Thing that is hateful in the Eyes of God; And 2^{dly}, that as God was not, could not be the Cause of its Commission; so he has spared no Pains, Miracles, Graces, Judgments, on Persons, Families, Cities, Countries, yea, the whole World, to exterminate this cursed Thing out of the Earth. The holy Scriptures give us large Accounts of these Truths; that, to punish and extirpate

tirpate this monstrous Thing, he destroy'd not only a whole Countrey by Fre and Brimstone, but even a whole World of Sinners, by a Flood of Waters which overspread the Earth; and that ere long, when an universal Prevalence of Iniquity shall make it worthy of so severe a Judgment, another more dreadful Inundation of Fire shall surprise and destroy this sinful World: Tho' to preserve it, if possible, from this great Destruction, the Holy Spirit of God continually supplies Mankind with necessary Lights and Graces to purify 'em from Sin; and has foretold some lesser Judgments; lesser, comparatively speaking, tho' in themselves terrible and awakening; as Earth-quakes, Pestilence, Famine, Wars universal, &c. to rouse a stupid sinful World to a Sense of Virtue and Religion, and to be as Earnests of the certain Accomplishment of God's greater Judgments, if Men, by serious Repentance, prevent them not.

And lo, my Brethren, when these Things come to pass, they convince the World of Sin; and seeing, in the present Age, these strange Disturbances in Nature have been, and are more common than heretofore; the God of Heaven and Earth proclaims hereby the Prevalence of Sin, and warns the Sinners of the Earth, that Wick- edness is, as it were, accomplish'd, and ripe for Destruction; that these frightful Scenes, that open every Day upon the Stage of Nature, are Preparations to usher in that great and terrible Day of Fire and Vengeance.

Be not offended, because I say, these Disorders in the World are Signs and Effects of Sin, and Preparations to more terrible Judgments; but rather prostrate your selves with Fear: Endeavour by Humility to avert God's Judgments; acknowledge your Vileness, crawl on the Earth, say, We are more vile than Worms; the Holes of the

Earth

Earth are a Refuge for the Worms; but where, in what Hole shall Sinners hide themselves, when the Elements melt, when the Mountains flame, when the Valleys smoak, and the Rivers boil? The nearer the Accomplishment of these Things approaches, the more strongly are we incited to Repentance and a holy Life; and since, by all antecedent Signs, it is so far already advanced, that we have all Reason to be every Moment on our Watch; do you then, in the Name of God, pursue the Direction of these Truths: Begin your Repentance, your too late Repentance, with Fear and Trembling; cease from the Ways of Violence and Oppression, of Lust and Drunkenness, of Lies and Slander.

Your Salvation, my Brethren, is dear to me as my own; and as with a vigilant Eye I have, in the Course of my Ministry among you, endeavour'd to observe what might be advantageous, and what prejudicial to it; so from Time to Time I have given you such Counsels, Cautions, and Instructions, as to me seem'd proper to preserve the holy Seed of Truth from being blasted, devour'd, or choak'd by the Birds of the Air, or the Stones of Persecution, or by the Thorns of worldly Cares, or deluding Riches; and teach you safely to arrive at the blessed Land of Rest and Peace, thro' the manifold Temptations of this dangerous World: And now also, I see you compass'd with many Dangers from this World; I see, on one Hand, God's Judgments pouring forth, and the last Sentence ready to be executed on an impenitent World; I see, on the other, some well dispos'd Souls, receiving the Word with Joy, while others hasten to Hell, as Men that run a Race. I see the vile Instruments of Satan, zealous to promote their Master's Interests, and envying that others should be happier than themselves, strive, Might

Might and Main, to make 'em Companions of their Miseries; to which End, they spread Temptations in their Way to corrupt their Principles, and deprave their Virtue; to fill their Hearts with a Multiplicity of Cares and Troubles, Anxieties and Fears, by which to distract their Minds from God, and hinder the Growth of the Seed which they had receiv'd with Joy.

Having these Scenes before me, my Heart does labour for your Salvation; and as from my Heart I pray, that whatever opposes the Salvation of your Souls, may be confounded and fly before you, as I earnestly beseech the Spirit of Grace to convert the Wicked, and to preserve the Good from the Dangers of this wicked, deluding World; so the Practice of my Text being one of the best Preservatives from Sin in all the World: I proceed, from these introductory Remarks, to the practical Instructions for ordering your Conversation.

Enter not into the Path of the Wicked, and go not in the Way of evil Men, who are all of them so zealous for their Master's Cause, that, like faithful Servants, they constantly endeavour to enlarge his Power, which they do by inticing others to Sin, which can alone subject us to his Power: And this they do, some one Way, some another, according to their different Capacities and Powers, and according to their various Improvement in the mysterious Practices, Arts, and Politicks of the hellish Kingdom. But to defeat the Designs of such against you; live in continual Vigilance and Prayer; treasure up in your Heart the Laws of God, and frequently consider the End of Things. Seriously reflect on what you are, and what, by God's Grace, you hope to be: Your excellent Nature, with the Hopes and Expectations belonging to it, will raise your Hearts above
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the Power of mean Temptations. Are you Children of God, and Heirs of the heavenly Kingdom? Why then, debase not your selves by mean and unworthy Ends and Actions; suffer not your Thoughts and Desires to fix and center on worldly Objects: Your Treasure is laid up in Heaven, and where your Treasure is, there let your Conversation be. And as the Reflexion on your excellent End and Nature will serve to preserve you from the Ways of wicked Men, and to keep you steady in the Paths of Virtue; so likewise this End will be excellently served, by proposing to your selves some Questions like to these. The Souls of the Adulterer and the Drunkard, the Covetous and Unjust, the Liar and Swearer, Where are they now? These, while they lived, were reputed happy Men; but now, alas, their Glory is departed, and they are in Torment and in Darkeness; and does the Remembrance of past Enjoyments yield any Allay to their present Sufferings? Alas, thro' Extremity of Pain, they wish they never had been; and I, if I enter into the Paths of such, most certainly shall be in the same dreadful State as they. By Reflexions and Questions like to these, Sin will appear exceeding terrible, more terrible far than Death; you will overcome Temptations, and go on with Courage in the Ways of Virtue, despising all sensual Advantages and Delights, which one can't enjoy but at the Expence of one's Innocence and Virtue, and at the Hazard of one's eternal Happiness.

To keep you yet further from the Ways of wicked Men, endeavour to think rightly of this present World, and of them that dwell therein; and, in order to it, be frequent in reading the holy Scriptures; comparing with them the Lives of Men, and the present State of the World, with the Characters therein predicted of it; and

you will soon be convinc'd of this lamentable Truth, *viz.* That the Generality of Men are Enemies of God, and of Jesus Christ, and subject to the Powers of Darknes; that this Evil is not only in the Heathen, but also in the Christian World, where the Lives of Men do plainly testify, that they are Confederate with the Devil: And the Certainty of this much to be lamented Truth, will force every Man, who is sincere, to acknowledge the Necessity for such as do desire safely to pass thro' the Perils of this World, to converse in it with a great deal of Caution, Prudence, and Discretion; because we all partake of a frail and corrupt Nature, are prone to Evil, and naturally averse to Good; the very best among us comes very short of the Mark of our high and holy Calling, and therefore the great Purpose of our Life should be, to purify our Souls from those Sins and Frailties that are become natural to us, preferring such Circumstances of Life, as far as in us lies, as are most favourable to the Sanctification of them, and as becomes Men who press toward the Mark of their holy State, adding one Virtue to another.

Heretofore when the World was not near so wicked as at present, illuminated Souls dreaded the Perils of it; sensible of their own Frailty and Corruption, and of its depraving Nature, they retired to Woods and Deserts, to Caves and Rocks; and they who can't preserve their Virtue in the midst of this naughty World, ought to retire from it. Men must cut off their Hands, pluck out their Eyes, forsake Father and Mother, House and Lands, according to the Counsel of Jesus Christ; that is, break and disengage from all natural, worldly Objects and Employments prejudicial to the Kingdom of God within, demonstrating hereby, that they love God more than all

all Things; and that they seek God's Kingdom, and the Righteousness thereof, with their first and principal Endeavour.

Religion runs very low; and tho' many unhappy Causes, like inauspicious Planets, contribute to it; yet none is of a more dangerous Effect than a loose unguarded Conversation; because 'tis natural to us to imitate and conform to others; and Conversation, good or bad, gives Virtue or Vice an easy Impression on us. Look into the World, and there you see how, by Reason of this Property in Things to assimilate others to themselves, Virtue and Vice are propagated. Every Thing in Nature tends to change others to its Likeness: The Sun-beams, they tincture all Things with their Brightness; the Fire, it changes into Fire; Colours, they cast a Reflexion on adjacent Bodies; diseas'd Bodies, they spread their Infection by Effluvias: So likewise our spiritual Properties, Modesty and Impudence, Humility and Pride, Simplicity and Cunning, are communicated by the Air, Gestures, Speech, and Behaviour visible in Conversation: Our Breath, our Actions and Behaviour, convey the Spirit of our Mind to others, and tend to assimilate 'em to the good or evil Qualities that are in us: An immodest Behaviour provokes to Lust, and the Poyson of other Vices passes in the same Manner from one to another; wherefore be cautious how, and with whom you converse: Beware of familiarizing with a Drunkard, Adulterer, Swearer, or any of those Sinners, of whom you read in Scripture, that they shall be excluded from the heavenly Kingdom.

A Man's Spirit and Inclination may be in great Measure known by the Company he uses; because 'tis natural to resort to them whose Manners resemble ours. He who frequents the Society of

Men void of all Piety and Religion, will quickly be tempted to lay them aside himself, as an uneasy Burden : To think to preserve our Virtue while we use such Conversations, is to build on a Foundation of Pride and Vanity ; and we shall soon see Cause to lament our Folly, in the Loss of our Virtue and good Conscience. Our Life in this World is led as it were among Beasts greedy of our Destruction, and variously qualified to effect it, according to the working of the Enemy of our Salvation in them : To one, he gives a Spirit of Violence and Fury ; to another, a Spirit of Cunning and Deceit ; to another, a Spirit of Impurity ; to others, a Spirit of Avarice, Ambition, Envy, Lying, and the like, to enlarge his Dominion in the World. Be cautious therefore of your Conversation ; forsake the Society of violent and furious Men ; avoid a Flatterer, that suits his Discourse to your Inclinations, extols your Qualities, and commends whatever you do or say ; and depart from them who incite you to pursue the Riches or Pleasures of this World ; but especially from them who deal in Oppression, Injustice, Adultery, Drunkenness, Oaths and Imprecations, or such like Sins. Prefer a good Character to Gold and Silver ; and the Salvation of your Souls, to any worldly Gains : Grace and Virtue will embalm your Names, make your Memorials sweet ; when the Names of the Drunkard, Swearer, Adulterer, and other Sinners, shall be infamous and rot.

Remember that God has made you for himself, and treasure up in your Minds those great astonishing Words in Scripture ; *In the Image of God, made he Man* ; Thou, O God, madest Man to be immortal, and a perfect Image of thine own Eternity ! Ye are Sons of God, and Co-Heirs with Jesus Christ ; and seeing God has made you for himself,

self, labour to prepare your Hearts for him, that God may dwell in you with Delight: Make pure your Consciences from, not only the gross Sins of Injustice, Intemperance, Adultery, and the like; but from the secret ones of Pride and Vanity, of Lust and Envy: Root out whatever favours of the World and Self, till nothing remains but Zeal for God, and Charity to his Creatures: Make choice, if possible, of Friends, whose holy Conversation may increase your Piety, and improve the heavenly Graces in your Hearts. Be not divided in your Intention and Desires, but let your Eye be single, and your Heart sincere: *You cannot serve God and Mammon.*

Make your Conversation consistent with your Prayers: You call *God, who is in Heaven, your Father.* Set therefore your Affections on Things in Heaven; shew that he is your Father, by a cheerful ready universal Obedience to his Will; by zealous Endeavours to be like him, especially in Charity and Beneficence to others. You pray for *the Sanctification of his Name; for the establishing his Kingdom, and doing of his Will in Earth, as it is in Heaven:* Here manifest again, that you are real and sincere, by opposing Sin to the utmost of your Power; by devoting your selves to God; by hungering and thirsting after Righteousness, and preparing your Souls, that God may set up his Kingdom in them. You pray, that *God would give you every Day your daily Bread:* Then having Food and Raiment, be content; be not solicitous, discontented, or uneasy about external Things; acknowledge God's Goodness in every Blessing; avoid all Intemperance, Drunkenness, and Excess; if you have more than sufficient, be ready to give to the Necessities of others. You pray to God, *to forgive your Sins; to defend you from Temptations; and to deliver you*

from Evil: Shew again that you are sincere, by your Charity and Compassion toward others; by a Readiness to forgive all Offences which your Brethren commit against you; by industriously shunning all Opportunities and Temptations that lead to Sin; and by endeavouring to redeem your Souls from the Power of Sin and Satan; and particularly, by declining from the Ways of the Wicked, and from the Paths of evil Men, as you are counsell'd in the Text.

Thus I have endeavour'd to illustrate the Text by such practical Instructions as are contained in it, or do naturally meet our Thoughts as we meditate on it: Whoever practises these Instructions, will find them a Spring of Strength, Support, Comfort, and Refreshment to him in all the Temptations and Distresses of this Life; Grace and Virtue shall adorn his Soul: His Light shall be conspicuous, and seen of Men; beautiful and glorious as a Chrystal on which the Sun in its Brightness shines. And what shall I say more to invite and encourage your Practice? Blessed are they who walk not in the Counsels of ungodly Men, in whom the Spirit of Disobedience rules, by Envy or Malice, by Avarice or Voluptuousness, by Pride or Revenge, by Oaths or Imprecations. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after Righteousness: Blessed are they who have Eyes to see, what does prejudice or promote the Kingdom of God within. Blessed are they who every Day dedicate themselves to God; remember their Baptismal Covenant, their holy Consecration, their heavenly Hopes, and high Vocation. Blessed they who continually pray to God to direct their Ways, to guide their Feet, to prosper their Endeavours, to preserve 'em from Temptations, to deliver 'em from Evil, and to manifest
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his Salvation to them. In a Word, Blessed they to whom God hath given a single Eye, and a single Ear, that when it hears Truth, is instructed; when it sees, it is enlighten'd by it. Ah me! Alas, my God! Alas, my Brethren! How rare is a single Eye, the Eye of a sincere Heart? How common is an Eye of Envy, an Eye of Lust, an Eye of Self-Delusion? Those base insincere Dispositions with which the holy Spirit of Wisdom will not, cannot dwell; but departing from us, returns back to him who sent her forth, with Tidings of our indispos'd Hearts.

And thus, in Love to God, and to your Souls, I give Counsel and Instruction to redeem you from the Power of Sin and Satan; for where Sin does reign, there likewise Satan and evil Spirits reign: But, lo, it happens to me, as to *David*, at whom King *Saul* let fly his Javelin, while he endeavour'd to drive the evil Spirit from him; so while, by salutary Counsels and Instructions, I seek with paternal Bowels your Happiness and Salvation, you let fly the Arrows of Slander at me: You say, He preaches Lies, he disturbs our Peace, and other Accusations you bring against me, like those which the Author of the Book of Wisdom tells us, were formed by the Ungodly, spoke of there. He reproaches us, say you, with offending the Law. He objects, to our Infamy, the Transgressions of our Education. He convinces us of Sin, and tells us, The Memorial of the Wicked shall rot, and their Names stink; That the multiplying Brood of the Wicked shall not prosper; That Children, begotten in Fornication and Adultery, shall witness against their Parents in the Day of Tryal; That Children, begotten in the lawful Bed, are a Curse, if not educated in the Fear of God; That for the sake of the Wicked, the Earth is cursed; That 'tis to punish our Sins,

that Wars and other Judgments rage; and that, without Amendment of Life, the Evils of the World are likely to abound: He tells us, that Swearing and Cursing is the Language of the Damned, and only qualifies to be Companions of Devils: He disturbs our Peace, by the Confessions of dying Men; accuses us of Cheating, and all Manner of Deceit: He says, that tho' our Cheating and Lies are forgot by our selves, they are recorded in the Memorial of God: He torments us, by saying, That Gains got by a secret fraudulent conspiring of Two or more to insnare and deceive a weak or unwary Man, are as the Sin of Robbery and Theft; And that, tho' the Confederates in Iniquity commit their Villanies in the secret Chamber, they are as open to God's All-seeing Eye, as what is done in Publick; And that, when these Confederates in Wickedness shall be call'd to Account, every Man's Iniquity shall be writ in his Forehead to witness against him; whereupon a horrible Guilt shall cast 'em headlong, and make 'em speechless, and they shall live in Repenting, and Anguish, and Torment, and Cursing.

In the Course of my Ministry among you, I have frequently enlarged on such Truths as these; but because you love to sin, and hate to be reformed, therefore these Truths, and the Preacher of them, are grievous to you; and, with the forementioned Sinners, you go on and say, Lo, here is a Man made to reprove our Thoughts. He is grievous to us, even to behold. His Life and Conversation are contrary to ours. We are esteem'd of him as Counterfeits. He abstains from our Ways as Filth. Come on therefore, let us strive to overcome him. Let us say all Manner of Evil of him. Let us load him with Calumny and Reproach: Let us lie in wait, and watch his Words;

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Let us destroy his Name, and make him more vile than our selves; Let us observe his Temper and Behaviour, and we shall find an Advantage, and prevail against him.

Were not the Testimony of Conscience more powerful to refresh and comfort, than the slanderous Tongues of Malice and ill Will are to terrify and condemn, I were indeed the most miserable Creature living: But I bear Witness, by Experience, that Integrity of Heart is a strong Support: Yea, my Brethren, the Society of Jesus Christ, of the holy Prophets, Martyrs, and Apostles, would make your Persecution of me ravishingly joyous and delightful, because of the promised Glory. On bended Knees I every Day beseech the most Holy God, to spare me in no humbling Affliction, Cross, or Persecution, whereby He, infinitely Wise, sees fit to purify and perfect my poor depraved Soul: But, alas! It is a killing Question this which Charity makes in your Behalf. Is the damning Sin of them, for whose Salvation I could wish to die, the Way thy Providence finds out to purify my Soul? Is this, my God, the holy Discipline of Wisdom? Is this the Answer to my Prayers? But now, what shall I say? Shall I silently complain to God? Or, shall I set before you the Sinfulness of your Ways? Would your Happiness be promoted by it, I could easily content my self to be a silent Sufferer; and if you all were alike disposed, it were better so to do; because, as *Solomon* speaks, *Prov. IX. 7. He that reproves a Scornor, gets himself Shame; and he that rebukes a wicked Man, gets himself a Blot*: But because there are among you some better dispos'd Souls, I will, for their Benefit and Edification, briefly tell you the Reflexions, which your Manners and Behaviour have led me to.

I have seriously consider'd your Ways and Doings, and am afraid, that Sin is risen to the Height. Conscience seems entirely raz'd out of too too many of you. There is a strong Confederacy in Iniquity, and Men link together to do the Devil's Work, filling the World with all sort of Abominations. Virtue and Goodness are the only Thing which too many among you seem to hate, pursuing it with Outrage and Persecution, and endeavouring to blot out, if possible, the very Notion of it, to set on the Devil's Head a Crown of Dominion over all the Earth. The Spirit of Lewdness, Intemperance, Oppression, Injustice, Lying, Calumny, together with a bold, resolute Defiance and Domineering, is risen among you: One of you excels in this, another is a greater Proficient in that Diabolick Art: You have Variance with each other, living in Strife and Envy, in Lies and Slander; but tho' you hate and revile each other, yet you link together in oppressing Virtue, like *Herod* and *Pilate*, who, as we read, were made Friends, and reconciled to effect the Destruction of Jesus Christ.

And because this wicked Spirit is among the Rich and Wealthy of you, I consider'd further, and which is the most deplorable Thing of all, methought it was hardly possible to find a Remedy to these Evils: Tho' a Man would never so fain, one hardly knew where to begin to mend the World among you, by Reason of the Confederacy of Iniquity, Men of Wealth and Substance linking together to support each other; and also because a young Race of Sinners is risen among us, bold, sturdy, resolute Defiers of God, and Haters of his Image; so that except God, in Mercy and Judgment, put a Stop to it, the Evil I have often warned you of, will come to pass,

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(viz.) Your Conversation and Behaviour will, in a little Time, become the very Manners of Hell.

While these Things were in my Thoughts, it was suggested to me, that the Extremity of Man is the Opportunity of God, *i. e.* that then is the proper Time for God to interpose his Hand, when there appear no Hopes of Remedy from humane Means. Accordingly my boding Spirit was apprehensive that God would visit you, and, some Way or other, check the proud Career of bold, resolute Sinners, who, like the Sea's furious Waves, bear all before 'em. And lo, while I thought, I heard a very strange and astonishing Rumour, *viz.* That the Hand of God had visited Two Men, whose Character, if you love God, and his Son Jesus Christ, must be nauseous and abominable to you, with a very sad Disease, caught, as the World says, in the filthy Acts of Whoredom. My Brethren, for the sake of these, and such like Sinners, Trembling and Horror seize me: You bring Reproach upon your selves, and the Ministry of God: Understand you not as yet, that a Judgment, like that which the Apostle speaks of, *Rom. I.* is either actually accomplished, or ready to be revealed among you, *viz.* That because you do not like to retain God in your Knowledge, God hath also given many of you up to a reprobate Mind, to do those Things that are not convenient; being fill'd with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whispers, Backbiters, Haters of God, Despightful, Proud, Boasters, Inventers of evil Things, disobedient to Parents, without Understanding, Covenant-Breakers, without Natural Affection, Implacable, Unmerciful, who, knowing the Judgment of God, that they who do such Things, are worthy of Death; not only do the same, but have Pleasure in them that do them.

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Nevertheless, as God hath given me an Eye to see, so he has given me a Heart to pity and pray for the Sins and Miseries of all my Fellow-Creatures, living in this Region of Sin and Vanity; more especially of such as you are concerned in. And I do, from the Bottom of my Heart, beseech the most Gracious God, to bring Home this merciful Judgment to the surviving Sinner's Heart, and to make him so sensible of his Mercy, in sparing him, who was not more righteous than his deceas'd Fellow-Sinner, that he may lead the Remainder of his Life in Repentance and godly Fear; being very sensible, that an Affliction so temper'd with Mercy and Judgment, if it prove not a Mercy, is a terrible Judgment, and will forward a Reformation, or compleat a Devil. And I heartily pray God, to put a Stop to the Progress of this contagious Distemper, to preserve even my Persecutors and Slanderers from it; tho' I am exceeding apprehensive that, one Way or other, God will visit you with his Judgments, because Evils seem risen to the Height, Iniquity triumphs, is had in Honour and Esteem, while Piety and Virtue, the Glory and Excellence of our Nature, is ridicul'd and persecuted: Men link together to support the Cause of Satan, and propagate his Dominion; and the Evils, almost irremediable Evils of the World, do cry aloud to God for Vengeance: And as the Hand of God begins to shew it self, so I would have you all to observe henceforward, the Lives and Deaths of Men of wicked Characters, who turn the Grace of God to Wantonness; especially of such as employ their vile Tongues to vilify a Man, who, tho' infinitely unworthy of it, is yet of the most Honourable Profession upon Earth, I mean, a Priest of the most High and Holy God.

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Mean while, it grieves me at my Heart to see you continually provoke God's Judgments more and more: My Soul is in Pain, and I am at a Loss for Words to express my Sorrow and Concern to see you, instead of amending, grow daily worse and worse, under the Means of Amendment and Reformation; to see the most precious Graces and Lights of God dispensed in vain. My Charity is at a Loss, and I know not what to pray for, for you: Sometimes I would pray for an Increase of Lights and Graces; and my Heart it answers, They spill the precious Liquor of God's Grace, they tread under Foot the Pearl of Value: Sometimes I am ready to pray for averting God's Judgments from you; again, my Heart replies, All gentler Methods will be inefficacious; Judgments are the greatest Mercies. *When thy Judgments are in the World, the Inhabitants of it will learn Righteousness.* It is the Counsel of the wise Man, (Prov. IX. 7.) *He that reproveth a Scornor, gets himself Shame; and he that rebukes a wicked Man, gets himself a Blot.* Not that to reprove a Scornor, or to rebuke a wicked Man, is justly reproachful to the Reprover; No, the Glory of God, and Edification of our Neighbours, in many Cases, require it of us; and he who stands unconcerned, and sees God's holy Laws profanely trampled on, makes himself answerable for the Sins of others; because his Silence and Connivance gives Encouragement: And tho' the Profane and Wicked love them who favour, or do not oppose their wicked Courses; yet such are truly despicable in the Eyes of God, and all true Lovers of him. How then does he who reproveth a Scornor, and rebukes a wicked Man, procure Shame and Infamy to himself? Why, because the usual Returns which Men of this Character make for this charitable Office of Reproof, is Hatred and

and ill Will. If a reprov'd Sinner be serious, and dispos'd to Repentance and Amendment, he will love you for it; but, if he be not dispos'd for Amendment, he will pursue you secretly with Hatred and ill Will; and, when Occasion serves, with Persecution, because his Conscience tells him, he is esteem'd by you as an insincere and wicked Man; and, as oft as he sees or thinks upon you, he reflects upon himself in Characters of Reproach and Shame; which, tho' it really be his Due, he cares not to be so esteem'd by you: And because he is inwardly insincere and wicked, and desires to be esteem'd sincere and good, and is conscious to himself, that you see thro' his Veil of Hypocrisy and Deceit, he will be sure to hate you, and, if Occasion be, to blacken your Character, and deprave your Virtue, by Lies and Calumny, or persecute you with open Fury, as is exemplified in the Persons of Jesus Christ, the Prophets and Apostles, who were treated in this Manner by the wicked Generation with whom they liv'd.

Jeremiah's Complaint, Chap. XV. is very extraordinary, and your spiteful, mad Behaviour, makes the Case of him who preaches to you, not much unlike. Wo is me, my Mother, that thou hast born me, a Man of Strife, and a Man of Contention to the whole Earth. I have neither lent on Usury, nor Men have lent to me on Usury; yet every One of them doth curse me. O Lord, thou knowest, remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my Persecutors; take me not away in thy Long-suffering: Know that for thy Sake I have suffered Rebuke. Thy Words were found, and I did eat them; and thy Word was unto me the very Joy and Rejoicing of my Heart. I am call'd by thy Name, O Lord God of Hosts. I sat not in the Assembly of the Mockers, &c. And as our Suffering is not, so neither is the Cause of it unlike. Conscience evidences better Things than Spight or

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Envy: The Word of God hath been sweet and joyous, precious and delightful to me: My Heart hath been refresh'd, and my Eyes inlighten'd by it: I lov'd it my self, and fought to enamour others with its Excellence. I taught it to you with Simplicity and Truth; it was a Spring of Comfort and reviving, not only to the Good, but also to the greatest Sinners, if penitent and sincere; but a Glas of Terror and Confusion to the Impenitent: I shew'd you, by the Light of it, that Peace and Joy of Conscience were only to be found in a Christian Life, and the Practice of Repentance, Self-Denial, Meekness, Charity: But Men love Sin, and Truths which humble and reprove, are odious to 'em; and I, had I seen the Covetous, the Oppressor, the Liar, Adulterer, and other Sinners, whose Sins are written in the black Catalogue of Damnation, drive furiously to Hell, in the Chariot of each Man's Iniquity, without crying out unto them to stop, and to return; I had then been acceptable unto Men, but vile in the Sight of God: But because I have been just to the Interests of Mens Souls, spoken the Truth, as it is in Jesus Christ, both to the Rich and Poor, the Sick and Healthy; because, when Rich and Prosperous, Men have, by secret Confederacies, agreed to support each other, in plowing contrary to the Customs of this Place, to the Injury and Oppression of their poorer or more peaceable Neighbours; I have privately declared such Gains to be unjust and oppressive, and have persuaded the prosperous Man to blot out his Unrighteousness and Oppression, by Justice, Charity, and good Works: Because again, when I saw the Dying tortur'd in Conscience, and lamenting miserably his Misfortune, in having entred into such Conversations and Ways of Dealing, accusing many engag'd in the same,

same, as vile Confederates in Iniquity, as Men, or rather Beasts of Prey, that watch Occasions to bite and devour, and leave Marks of their Infamy in every Place; and are indeed scarce fit to live, much less to die: Because then I charitably warned others not to bring themselves under the like Tortures; to use no Lies or Swearing, Deceit or Cursing, but to act towards all with Truth and Justice; to commit no Outrage on the Road, or in the secret Chamber, and rather to quit their Dealing, than continue in Sin; preferring the Salvation of their Souls, to Gains got by Fraud, by Oaths, or Lying; to atone their past Sins, by Righteousness; and to reconcile themselves to God, by Charity and good Works: Because again, when Men laugh and whisper in the House of God, turning the Temple of Prayer and Praise into a Stage of Mirth and Diversion: I have privately represented to them, tho' rich and prosperous in the World, that by such Behaviour they dishonour God, and prejudice their own Salvation; expose their Parents to Reproach and Shame, and make themselves vile in the Eyes of God, and of all who love him.

Because, again, when Men have liv'd in a visible Neglect of God's publick Worship, as too many among you do, to the great Scandal of Religion; I bring it to Remembrance on a Bed of Sickness, exhort such Sinners seriously to lament the Dishonour done to God, the Scandal given their Neighbours, and Injury done to their own poor Souls, by their profane Neglect; to search their Hearts to the Bottom, and see what Destruction the watchful Enemy of our Salvation has wrought, and endeavour'd to repair it by a sincere, tho' late Repentance: Because, in a Word, I convince you of the Necessity of Repentance, and teach Oppressors to restore the Fruits

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Men, of their Oppression; because I labour to loose you from the Chains of Satan, by the salutary Discipline of Prayer, Charity, Self-Denial, and the like, and you are not dispos'd for the Practice of it; you seek to cover my Name with Infamy and Reproach, fulfilling in me the wise Man's Observation; *He that reproveth a Scornor, gets himself Shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked Man, gets himself a Blot.*

And if this be the Way of the Men of this Generation, whereunto shall I liken them? they are like certain wicked Men, who, seeing a Man of Integrity and Virtue, said to one another, Lo, this Man's Life is not fashioned, nor are his Thoughts like to ours; he will be a Reproach to us as long as he retains his Virtue: So they try'd to deprave him, and when they could not, they were vext with Envy; and said, it will not be well while our Lives are thus reproach'd, and they consulted together to make him infamous by Calumny and Lies.

Again, unto what shall I liken the Men of this Generation? They are as Men cover'd with Plague-Spots, but being delirous, thought themselves in Health: And a charitable Man seeing the Danger of their Condition, warned them of it; but raving they said, We are well; and all of them dy'd.

Again, the Men of this generation are like certain wicked Men who gave themselves up to all sort of Abominations, and, when God call'd them to Repentance, they would not hear; and as they wantoned in Abominations, and worshipped the Devil, blaspheming the God of Heaven, God smote one and he dy'd, and the Remnant were blinded, and saw not the Hand of God, nor pray'd him to take away his Judgments from them, but went on wantoning in all sort

of Abominations; wherefore God smote the rest, who dy'd one after another, remorseless and blaspheming.

Again, the Children of this Generation are like Iron, which, when a Man had found, he try'd to break it, but could not; so he said, surely it cannot be broken: But a Man, wiser than he, took it, and brought it to the Fire, and the piercing Darts of Fire enter'd into it, and caus'd it to dissolve and run abroad: So the Sinners of the Earth encourage themselves, saying, our Heart is hard and obstinate, it will not relent nor yield; but as they talk together like Fools, boasting of the Hardness of their Hearts, the Fire of God's Wrath enters into them, and their obstinate Hearts melt, and they cry out thro' Extremity of Torment.

My Brethren, the Time draws on, when the Resolute shall tremble, and the Stout in Heart melt into Tears: Behold, I see you in the Pangs of Death; I hear you lament the Folly of your Lives; and in Agony cry out, Wo, wo, be to us, that we have liv'd carelessly and profane: Wo, that we have not practis'd God's Commandments, nor follow'd the Counsels of Jesus Christ; Wo, that we have despis'd his Ministers, and laugh'd at their Reproof: Alas, now we would give a Thousand Worlds for a Moment of the precious Time, heretofore allowed us to work out our Salvation in: I hear you curse your selves, call to the Mountains to fall upon you, wishing your very Beings were extinguish'd.

This charitable Admonition I give you all, because these Things will be accomplish'd in you, except, by timely Repentance, you prevent them. Lo, Time and Opportunity are present, but who knows how soon your Souls may be required; and,

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unless you have put on the holy Garments, you shall be driven from the Face of God.

Practise the Instruction I close withal, and all will be well. As hitherto you have liv'd as if you had no Salvation to be concern'd about; so live henceforward, as if Salvation were your whole Concern.

A P R A Y E R.

GIVE me *Wisdom* that sitteth by thy Throne, and reject me not from among thy Children; for I, thy Servant, am subject unto Vanity, and the Thoughts of my Heart are miserable from my Birth. The Knowledge of thy Laws is an impenetrable Abyſs, except Thou give Wisdom, and send down thy holy Spirit from above.

O let thy *Wisdom* enter into me, and teach my Soul in the Mysteries of thy Love: Let her teach me to be a Friend of God, and a Lover of his Works; so shall I preach thy Laws with Simplicity and Truth, and feed thy Children with Prudence and Discretion. I shall bring them to the Knowledge of thy Works; how thy Creatures were originally formed; how Corruption enter'd into them; and from whom Redemption shall come. I shall inform them, O Father, how, when we were fallen, the Eternal *Word* became our Mediatour; how, for his Sake, our Ruine was suspended; how he enter'd into the Souls of such as loved him; and training them up in his holy Discipline, ordain'd them to be Sons of God and Prophets; how, to make us Partakers of immortal Glory, he assumed our Nature, and dwelt among us.

' O let thy Spirit enter into me ; let it preserve
 ' me from the Fear of Men, and from the Love
 ' of corruptible Things, so shall I seek thy Glory
 ' with a sincere Heart. I shall rejoice in the Bles-
 ' sings, and be griev'd in the Miseries of all thy
 ' Creatures : I shall be a Friend to the Afflicted,
 ' a Support to the Weak, a Comfort to the Di-
 ' strefs'd, a Guide to the Wandring, a Teacher
 ' of the Ignorant, a Reprover of Sin ; Kind to
 ' all, envious to none, doing Good for Evil, and
 ' returning Prayer and Blessing for Hatred and
 ' Persecution.

' Even so, O Father, thy *Wisdom* descending
 ' from above, teaches all who submit their Hearts
 ' to be disciplin'd by her.

' O Gracious God, who, in thy infinite Mercy,
 ' hast given me Eyes to see, and Charity of Heart
 ' to pity the Miseries of all my Fellow-Creatures,
 ' I do now, with all Humility, present my Pray-
 ' ers at the Footstool of thy Grace, in Behalf of
 ' my self, and of all my Fellow-Sinners, the De-
 ' scendants of sinful *Adam*, who dwell in this
 ' Region of Sin and Vanity ; beseeching Thee to
 ' look with an Eye of Mercy on us all ; and to
 ' send forth thy Spirit of Truth and Counsel, of
 ' Healing and Refreshment, to direct and comfort
 ' us in all the Miseries to which we are by Sin
 ' subjected.

' I do, O Lord, with a sighing penitent Heart
 ' acknowledge, in Behalf of all, that we are a
 ' World of miserable Wretches, justly confin'd
 ' to the Prison of this World, wherein we groan
 ' under the sad Effects of Sin and Vanity, and
 ' are oppress'd with innumerable Evils, spiritual
 ' and corporeal.

' We were shapen and conceived in Sin, and
 ' therefore are justly born into a miserable World ;
 ' but we, alas have increas'd its Miseries, by mul-

multiplying its Transgressions! O Lord, the Foundations of the Earth are unsettled, and the Nature of every Thing is reverst. Wickedness overflows it as a Flood; Iniquity triumphs, it is had in Honour and Esteem; while Virtue is exploded, Piety ridicul'd, and Religion, the Glory and Excellence of our Nature, is turn'd into Shame and Reproach: A Name of Pride and of Envy, of Ambition and Voluptuousness, of Wrath and Contention, of Blasphemy and Profaneness, of Lying and Slander, of Oppression and Deceit, of Drunkenness and Whoredom, is sign'd on the Inhabitants of the Earth: And tho' a few are preserv'd from the damning Evils of the World, a few who, with Sincerity of Heart, continually press toward the Mark of their high Vocation; yet, by Reason of the Contagion of Sin, they live in continual Danger: And tho' the Power of thy Grace preserve them from it; yet the depraving Mixture of Self-Love and worldly Regards debases their Virtue, so that short, very short they come of the excellent Pattern which Thou hast propos'd; and shouldst Thou, O Righteous Judge, enter into Judgment with us, hardly would the Signature of Virtue and Perfection be found among us to stay its Execution.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art the Hope and Restorer of the fallen World: It is easy for Thee to heal all the Disorders of the material and spiritual World, and make all Things new! Oh, that Thou wouldst open the Fountain of thy Redeeming Graces, and arise with Healing in thy Wings, on the wretched Inhabitants of the Earth: Oh, that Thou wouldst send Conviction into the Hearts of the Proud and Sensual, the Worldly and Oppressor, the Slanderer, the Malicious, the Swearer, and every Sinner;

' that they may see and feel their Miseries, and,
 ' being weary of the Chains of Sin in which
 ' they are held, may, with Sighs and Tears, send
 ' up to Thee Desires of Redemption! Oh, that
 ' Thou wouldst open the Spring of Faith and
 ' Prayer, that all of us may join with Ardour
 ' and Importunity, beseeching thy Gracious Spi-
 ' rit to open the Treasury of thy Graces, and
 ' cause 'em to fly abroad in Rays of Purity,
 ' Light, Conviction, Strength, and Power, on the
 ' poor, weak, miserable, dark, depraved Inhabi-
 ' tants of the Earth.

' O Lord, my Compassions are kindled for the
 ' Miseries of my Fellow-Creatures; with Charity
 ' of Heart, I present before Thee all the Evils un-
 ' der which we grone, beseeching Thee to mag-
 ' nify thy Mercies on a World of wretched Sin-
 ' ners, and to dispense suitable Graces to us all.

' Stop, I beseech Thee, by the Power of thy
 ' Grace, the furious Inundation of *Iniquity*, least
 ' it carry us away by its rapid Course. Open,
 ' O Lord, open, for the Glory of thy Name,
 ' the Fountain of thy Graces, and cause thy all-
 ' virtuous Gifts of Light, Conviction, Counsel,
 ' Strength, Understanding, Power, to fly abroad
 ' into the World, to rouse, illuminate, comfort,
 ' strengthen, and direct the Sinners of it.

' O Lord, it is thy Will that all should be
 ' saved; illuminate therefore all with the Know-
 ' ledge of thy saving Truth, and influence them
 ' by thy Spirit in the Practice of it. Reform the
 ' Wicked, enlighten the Ignorant, terrify the
 ' Resolute, rouse the Stupid, heal the Sick, com-
 ' fort the Distress'd, support the Weak, rescue
 ' the Oppressed, and vouchsafe unto all the Gra-
 ' ces needful to 'em.

' Assist, with thy Grace, all who desire Salvati-
 ' on, and enable them to seek it in the Way of

thy

thy Divine Counsels and Commandments. Let not, O Father, the Difficulties of Self-Denial and the Cross discourage us from encountering our Corruptions, and labouring to attain the Perfection which Thou hast proposed: Neither let the Indocility of thy Children weary thy Gracious Spirit, but endue us with Patience and Fortitude, willingly to submit to thy wholesome Discipline; and consider, I beseech Thee, with a fatherly Compassion, our State and Condition, that we are born with sinful Inclinations, and that living in an evil World that continually draws us to Vanity and Sin; it is impossible to overcome its manifold Temptations except Thou, as a Father, bear with our Infirmities, and vouchsafe, with an unwearied Patience, to counsel, support, and direct thy backsliding Children in the Ways of Holiness and Virtue. Condescend therefore, O Lord, I beseech Thee, to our manifold Weaknesses, and give us Comfort and Instruction suitable to them; feed us with Food convenient for us, with the plain and easy Truths of thy Gospel: Prepare us to receive 'em by Hunger and Thirst; and give us Grace to digest them, that they may become the Strength and Life of our Souls.

O let thy good Spirit be with all who fear thy Name, and gradually lead 'em from Virtue to Virtue, that they may daily increase in Wisdom, and ascending from lower to higher Attainments in the Christian Life, may be at last conformed to the excellent Image of thy dear Son. *Amen.*

A Meditation of a Sinner.

AH, Wo is me, miserable Wretch! Trembling and Horrour, the Horrour of a guilty Conscience seizes me: I have no Peace by Day

or Night; I am fill'd with the Terrours of an accusing Conscience: Many, many Years have I liv'd in Sensuality and Injustice; I have made Violence, Deceit, and Cunning, my Law of Right, not sparing the Fatherless and Widow. I ridicul'd Piety, I laugh'd at Conscience, living without Remorse, or Fear of God; and accounting the Rewards and Punishments of another World, as an idle Fable. Lo now, at last, I hear a Voice, that strikes me thro' and thro' with Terror, addressing to me: Rejoice not, O Sinner, in Iniquity: Think not to go unpunish'd: Behold every Thought, and Word, and Action, are recorded in the Book of God; Thy most secret Abominations are open to his Eye; and all the Curses, written in his Book, shall be accomplish'd in thee: The Proud, the Malicious, the Swearer, Drunkard, and other Sinners, who, while they liv'd, gloried in their Vileness, for every Delight, they suffer a thousand Pains; they liv'd in Jollity, but now, thro' Extremity of Pain, call to the Mountains to fall upon 'em; and thou, if thou lead a Life like theirs, shalt be mercilessly drag'd by Devils to the same dark Mansions, where now they are in Torment and in Cursing.

I, poor terrify'd Creature, flee from this Voice; the more I flee, the more closely it pursues; if I resort to Company, there it is with me; if I retire to Woods and Desarts, there do I feel its awakening Terrours: My Jollity and Delight is turned to Sadness; I wish to die, but still I live in Torment. I, poor wretched Sinner, must I be summon'd before God's great Tribunal, to be judged in Sight of all the World? the secret Abominations of my Life, Must they be all expos'd? Must every Thing be weigh'd in a righteous Ballance? and I, poor I, unless I shew the Fruits of Holiness; Must I be driven from the Face of God, to be eternally

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ternally lock'd up in the dark Mansions of Misery and Torment? O my poor sinful Soul, if this Alarm of Conscience strikes thee thro' with Terror; how wilt thou be seiz'd when the Voice of God shall thunder upon the Rock of thy obdurate Heart, and rend it in ten Thousand Pieces? How wilt thou be seiz'd, when the Foundations of the Earth are shaken, and the Dead are summoned, by the Arch-Angel's Voice, to appear before God's Tribunal? No Favour will then be shew'd to the Unjust, Oppressor, Drunkard, Adulterer, Swearer, Malicious; their Names are written in the Catalogue of Damnation. Terror shall be given 'em to be their Meat and Drink for ever. O my God! terrible are thy Judgments: Wo, wo, wo, is me; wo, to the Drunkard; wo, to the Swearer; wo, to the Adulterer; wo, to them that make, or love a Lie; wo, to the Oppressor; wo, to every Sinner: The Day is come for Wrath and Judgment; as Tares in Bundles, so shall the Confederates in Iniquity be cast into the Lake that burns for ever and ever.

As long as I live in this World, Time and Opportunity of Repentance are allowed: The Door of Grace is ready to be open'd, if I knock thereat; but after this Life, this Door will be fast shut. Lo now God calls; nay, he intreats me to repent, and I shut my Ears, despising his gracious Calls; the Time approaches when I my self shall be treated, as God is treated by me; I shall call, and not be answered; cry, and not be heard: I, who now boast of the Hardness of my Heart, shall weep and cry out, because of the Wrath of God.

O that my Conscience were awaken'd: O that God, whom I have so oft despis'd, would yet be gracious to me, and enable me to repent, ere Repentance come too late: Oh, that he would give me

me Grace to live henceforward as becomes a Sinner, over whom the Wrath of God does hang to spend the Remainder of my Life in Mourning and pious Sorrow, that my Sins, ere I die, may be blotted out; and my polluted Soul, now darkened with Horrour and Despair, may be revived and comforted with a Ray of Hope.

A Prayer for a penitent Sinner.

‘ **B**EHOLD, I beseech Thee, O gracious Lord, a wretched Sinner, at the Footstool of thy Grace, lamenting the Sinfulness of his Life; oft, and grievously have I offended Thee, abusing thy most precious Graces; I am ashamed to lift up my Eyes to Heaven, or beg Pardon for my great and tremendous Sins: But thy Promises revive and comfort my desponding Mind; Thou hast promis’d to receive a Sinner, whenever, with true Repentance, he returns to Thee.

‘ I know, O Lord, thy Word shall abide forever; tho’ Heaven and Earth shall fail, thy Promises shall stand firm. It is with an entire Dependence on them, that I prostrate my self, beseeching Thee to take Pity on the vilest of Sinners. Long and grievously, O Lord, have I offended Thee; I have led my Life with the Covetous and Ambitious, with the Proud and Spiteful, with the Drunkard and Oppressor, with the Swearer and Profane, till I sat down at last easy in the Scorners Chair, not feeling any Remorse for my evil Life, tho’ it was nothing else but Sin and Abomination. Yea, Lord, I cherish’d my vile Corruptions; I committed Sin with Greediness and Desire; I ridicul’d the Lives of sober and virtuous Persons: But now, Blessed be thy enlightening Grace, my Eyes begin to open; I see in Part my Vileness; I have my self in Horrour

‘ touch

touch'd with a Sense of my most deplorable Condition, I cry, Mercy, Mercy, Lord; and do Thou, O Gracious Lord, who hast promis'd to receive a Sinner whenever he turns to Thee, have Mercy on me.

My Conscience, O Lord, begins to awake; the Terrors of Sin surround me, the Guilt of Oppression, Injustice, Whoredom, Swearing, Malice, Calumny, and other Sins, haunt me like Legions of evil Spirits; it makes me sore afraid; in Dread and Horror, I wish my very Being were extinguish'd. Lord, from my Heart, I undo my Sins, to the utmost of my Power; from my Heart I wish I never had cast in my Lot with wicked Men; I detest their Society and Conversation; I give back the Fruits of my Injustice, Deceit, Oppression; I labour to break off my Sins by Righteousness, and seek to be reconcil'd to Thee, by Works of Mercy. In Agony of Soul I cry to Thee for Mercy; and do Thou, O Gracious Lord, who hast promis'd to receive a Sinner whenever he repents, have Mercy upon me.

Lord, I am impure, unclean; all my Faculties are in Darkness and Disorder; in nothing am I as I ought. I see, in part, my wretched State; I lament, with Tears, the Folly of my Life; with Tears I cry to Thee for Mercy, do Thou therefore, O Gracious Lord, who hast promis'd to receive a Sinner whenever he repents, have Mercy on me.

I sigh and groan under the Burden of my Sins; I am griev'd at my very Heart, that I have so oft dishonour'd Thee, my God; that I have laid so many Scandals in my Neighbours Way, and done such Despight to the Spirit of Grace: It grieves me, Lord, at my very Heart, and I deplore with Tears, that I, wretched Sinner, have spent

' spent my precious Time, graciously given me to my Si
 ' purify my Soul, and to prepare it by Humilitie ers an
 ' and Repentance for thy divine Enjoyments, in abjure
 ' covetous, oppressive, lewd, deceitful Courses the m
 ' in pursuing the painted Shadows of Happiness I sub
 ' the Honours, Riches, and Pleasures of thi I bes
 ' World, thus darkening my Mind, and alienat reject
 ' ing my Heart from the sincere Love of Thee Merc
 ' my God, and of my Fellow-Creatures: It grieves who
 ' me that, for the sake of these, I have liv'd in he re
 ' profane Neglect of thy holy Ordinances; that My
 ' have violated thy most righteous Laws, been Ligh
 ' unjust, uncharitable, angry, revengeful, proud Spirit
 ' making my Life, as it were, one great Violati and
 ' on of thy holy Laws, by a daily repeated Com return
 ' mission of many Sins, written in the black Ca disea
 ' talogue of Damnation. O Lord, the Remem its V
 ' brance of my past Life is a Terror to me, and heal
 ' the Apprehension of thy Judgments makes me E
 ' sore afraid: The Indignity, the Despite, the Rea
 ' Outrage I have done thy Spirit of Grace, do Mer
 ' quite confound me; I know not how to ask any ty:
 ' Grace or Favour to so vile a Sinner, who has I b
 ' made the greatest Graces, the greatest Aggra thy
 ' vations of his Guilt. In Agony and Horrour Bod
 ' O Lord, I cry to Thee, I beseech Thee not to fan
 ' cast out my Soul, nor to withdraw thy Mer Inst
 ' cies from me: With Tears I cry to Thee for to
 ' Mercy, do Thou, O Gracious Lord, who hast
 ' promis'd to receive a Sinner whenever he returns
 ' to Thee, have Mercy on me.

' O Lord, the Sensibility of my Soul is touch-
 ' ed, my Repentings within me are kindled, and,
 ' with all the Vehemency of Desire, I cry to Thee
 ' for Mercy. O cast not away my Soul, give it
 ' not up to an impenitent Sense; give it not up
 ' eternally to feel the Terrors created to it self:
 ' With Sighs and Groans I beg Deliverance from
 ' my

my Sins. My Life is an Abomination ; my Powers and Faculties are vile and odious to me ; I abjure, I detest my former Life. To thee I bring the miserably depraved Faculties of my Soul ; I submit them to the Discipline of thy Spirit. I beseech Thee, by the Bowels of thy Mercy, reject me not ; with Tears I cry to Thee for Mercy, and do Thou, O Gracious Lord, who hast promis'd to receive a Sinner whenever he repents, Have Mercy on me.

My Soul, O Lord, is ignorant and dark ; send Light, I beseech Thee, into this dark benighted Spirit, that I may understand my vile Estate, and forsaking the Vanities of the World, may return to Thee. My Heart, alas, is corrupt, diseas'd, and sick : Pour, I beseech Thee, into its Wounds the sanctifying Oil of Grace, and heal it.

Every Thing in me, O Lord, is depraved, my Reason, Senses, Imagination, Passions, and all the Members of my Body are polluted with Iniquity : Change, alter, separate, destroy, annihilate, I beseech Thee, by the powerful Operation of thy Spirit, till all the Faculties of my Soul and Body, hitherto Servants unto Sin, be thoroughly sanctified and renewed, and yield themselves Instruments of Holiness, of Love, and of Praise to Thee. *Amen.*

A Penitent Sinner's Prayer.

FATHER of Mercies, and God of all Comforts ! I prostrate my self at the Footstool of thy Grace, to acknowledge, with Shame and great Confusion, my Sin and Folly, in a Life led in open Contempt of thy holy Laws, and to
im-

‘ implore thy Grace and Pardon to a Sinner de-
 ‘ serving thy severest Judgments.

‘ Thou, O Gracious Father, was pleas’d to cre-
 ‘ ate me to the best of Ends, and didst prescribe
 ‘ me good and wholesome Laws, as the Means of
 ‘ my Attainment of that blessed End; and these
 ‘ Thou didst graciously, not only grave on the
 ‘ Table of my Heart, but gavest me a written
 ‘ Declaration of thy Will, shewing me what was
 ‘ good and acceptable in thy Sight: But I, O Lord,
 ‘ transgressing thy holy Will, have led my Life
 ‘ in Disobedience to Thee. It is full of Evil
 ‘ and Severity is written against me, because
 ‘ have transgress’d thy righteous Laws, been led
 ‘ from one Sin to another, in an endless Round
 ‘ of Sinning, without Remorse or Dread, for
 ‘ many Years together, infatuated by the deceit-
 ‘ ful Illusions of the World, of the Devil, and of
 ‘ my own depraved Nature.

‘ I have not been mindful of the End for which
 ‘ Thou placedst me in the World, but have quick-
 ‘ ly departed from it, and am become, in Heart
 ‘ and in Affection, blind, and alienated from thy
 ‘ Life. Thou, Lord, hast said, Seek first the
 ‘ Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness there-
 ‘ of; and Blessed are they who hunger and thirst
 ‘ after Righteousness, and hast shewn us the Folly
 ‘ of a sensual Life: O that I had hearken’d to
 ‘ thy heavenly Wisdom, and been influenced and
 ‘ guided by it. But Lacknowledge, with Shame
 ‘ and great Confusion, that I have neither sought
 ‘ thy Kingdom with my first and greatest Care;
 ‘ nor indeed at all; but my Hunger and Thirst
 ‘ have been, alas, after the vain Delights of this
 ‘ wicked World, indulging my sensual Appetites,
 ‘ as Occasion did present. I, poor, blind, deprav-
 ‘ ed Wretch, neither knew, nor thought of any
 ‘ higher Enjoyment, than the base ones of this

‘ World;

World; tho in every Enjoyment I felt their
 Vanity, in that I return'd unsatisfy'd, as before.
 For this Cause, I am become vile and abomi-
 nable in thy Sight, and no Hopes are left of re-
 gaining thy Love and Favour, and delivering my
 Soul from eternal Torment, but by washing my
 Heart in the Water of Repentance, and becom-
 ing a renew'd heavenly Creature in Desire and in
 Affection. I acknowledge, O Lord, with Shame
 and great Confusion, my sensual Heart has led
 me into innumerable other Sins, to a Neglect of
 Prayer, Praise, and of Reading the holy Scrip-
 tures, that I might live in Sensuality without
 Remorse. And thus, by neglecting the Means
 of Holiness and Conversion, I have given Ad-
 vantage to the Devil, to alienate my Heart more
 and more from Thee, filling it with the Works
 of Darknes; so that I was become blind and
 deaf to spiritual Things, and insensible to the
 Pleasures arising from them: And, except thy
 gracious Spirit had created in me a Disgust of
 sensual Pleasures, and gradually prepared my
 Heart for a diviner Relish, I had not seen my
 Bestiality, but descended remorseless into Hell.
 Blessed be thy Name, O God, for recalling
 me by thy gracious Spirit from my miserable,
 hopeless State, when I deserv'd eternally to be
 abandon'd to it. Continue, I beseech Thee, thy
 Goodness to me, and perfect my Conversion.
 Open more and more the Eye of my darken'd
 Mind, and awaken the Sense of my immortal
 Spirit, that I may wisely despise all temporal
 Pleasures, and never, for the sake of base En-
 joyments, deprive my self of the heavenly Joys.
 Fill thou my Mind with Light and Under-
 standing to see the End of Things, and teach
 me to use thy Creatures to thy Glory, abhorring
 the Ways of Sensuality and Pride. Preserve
 me,

' me, dear Lord, from the terrible Guilt of a Re
 ' lapse into the Ways Thou hast graciously re
 ' call'd me from ; and since 'tis late ere I enter in
 ' to thy Vineyard, give me Grace to labour more
 ' diligently in it, manifesting the Sincerity of my
 ' Conversion, by a greater Degree of Zeal. And
 ' whenever the Corruption of my Nature, and
 ' the sinful Allurements of this World, would
 ' withdraw my Heart from Thee, vouchsafe to
 ' strengthen and support my Weakness, by thy
 ' powerful Assistance of thy Spirit, that, perse
 ' vering in the Ways of Piety and Religion, I may
 ' at last obtain the promis'd Rewards, thro' Jesu
 ' Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Penitent Sinner.

' **B**E H O L D, O God, a dejected Son of sinful
 ' Adam, kneels down before Thee, to lament
 ' the Sins and Follies of his Life, and to beg thy
 ' pardoning and sanctifying Grace.

' Many are the Sins and Infirmities I in
 ' herit from my Birth, and many more I have
 ' contracted by a voluntary Transgression of thy
 ' righteous Laws, increasing the Miseries of my
 ' Nature, and the heavy Burden my Parents laid
 ' upon me.

' The Assistance of thy Spirit hath been always
 ' ready to raise me from my depraved Estate, and
 ' from a Child of Adam, and Heir of Perdition
 ' to adopt me a Son of God, and Heir of the
 ' heavenly Kingdoms.

' I have felt, I own with great Confusion, the
 ' Impressions of thy Grace, by Allurements and
 ' Reproofs, awakening in me a Sense of Virtue
 ' and of my present forlorn Condition ; and
 ' stirring me up to implore the Pardon of my
 ' Sins, and thy precious redeeming Grace : But I

O Lord, depraved from my Birth, have defeated all thy good Incitements to Holiness and Virtue, and render'd all thy Graces inefficacious, by not co-operating with them.

'The Ways of Sin and Folly, by long walking in them, are become natural and pleasant; and the Ways of Virtue, irksome to me: Then, when my Soul was tender, and easily receptive of divine Impressions, I lived in Vanity and Folly, strengthening the perverse Habits and Inclinations that were born with me; so that, by Age and long Continuance, Sin is grown strong and stubborn, and almost incorrigible.

'Had I early enter'd into the Paths of Virtue, How easy, pleasant, natural, and delightful, sweet and divinely relishing had Piety and Religion been? But now, alas! thy heavenly Truths, in themselves more glorious than the Sun, are as Darkness; and thy divine Impressions are painful and uneasy to me. The Principles of Sense, and inferiour Objects, bear rule; as unjust Usurpers, they oppose the Impression of thy Spirit, and create a War within.

'Lord, from my Heart I wish my Soul was prepared to receive Thee, and every Faculty did stand as an open Gate ready to admit thy glorious Presence: But, alas! thy Habitation, the Habitation of my Heart, it is defiled; and, by the Intrusion of worldly sensual Objects, become a Den of Thieves.

'Lord, I beseech Thee, since my Soul is indisposed to receive Thee as a Friend, come, alter, and subdue its Contrariety; come, rescue it from thine Enemy's Power: Let thy holy Truth, as the orient Light, shine forth upon it, to dispel its Darkness, and exterminate its Corruption; that I, thy Creature, made for Happiness,
D Light,

Light, and Glory, may not for ever live in an Element of Misery and Darknes.

My Heart, O Lord, is so wretchedly depraved, I do not expect its Purification without inward Pains and Conflicts. War there will be between thy holy Spirit, and the Corruption of my Nature, till one or other is conquer'd and expell'd: Therefore I give up my Soul and Body to thy holy Discipline; only, I beseech Thee, support me under the Conflict of Flesh and Spirit; that I, poor depraved Creature, may suffer with Patience whatever Pains thy renewing Spirit, by its Impressions of Light and Purity, shall create within me; till my Corruption is subdued, my Heart changed, my Sanctification compleated, and thy Religion, from a hard uneasy Yoke, become the Joy and Delight of my Heart and Soul. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by a Parent.

O Heavenly Father, the blessed Fountain of all Being, who, in thy infinite Wisdom hast ordained the Increase of Mankind, by the Means of Procreation; I beseech Thee, give me Grace seriously to consider the End and Design of this Institution, and the excellent Nature of the Creatures, which, by Virtue of it, we are instrumental in bringing into the World; and enable me Conscientiously to pursue that blessed End, which thou hast ordained, and their excellent Nature points out to me.

Give me Grace seriously to consider, that Children are thy Gifts, created in thy Image, and capable eternally to love and enjoy Thee; that therefore, in bringing them into the World, we ought to propose, not the Satisfaction of

carnal Desires, but thy Glory; and to order the Education, wherewith we are intrusted to prepare 'em for thy blessed Enjoyment.

'And since, O heavenly Father, to engage my self to a more strict Performance of this Duty, as soon as my Children were born, I solemnly dedicated them to Thee by Baptism, How ought I to tremble at the Violation of so sacred an Engagement? What a sad Account must I give of the Souls committed to my Charge; if, instead of endeavouring to prepare 'em for thy beatifying Enjoyment, they are eternally lost, by my sinful Neglect!

'O Lord, pardon my great and tremendous Sin; remove from my Soul this Root of Bitterness, and let the Power of thy Grace remove from my Childrens Souls, all those Sins and Depravations of which I am, by Example, Neglect, or otherwise, the wicked Cause; and enable me henceforward to manifest my sincere Repentance, by a redoubled Zeal and Care for their immortal Souls.

'Suffer not, I beseech Thee, the Care of their mortal Bodies to engross my Thoughts; but let my principal Care be, to preserve their Souls unto eternal Life; and in order to it, vouchsafe to assist me to purify them from carnal and worldly Inclinations and Designs, to which we, degenerate Creatures, are naturally prone; to instil into them heavenly Affections, and, above all Things, to influence them in Piety and Religion, by my own Example; that they may see me a Pattern of that Charity, Meekness, and Humility, which I teach them.

'Make me, O Gracious Lord, to know my self, and assist me in imprinting early on my Childrens Minds, the Knowledge of the Sins and Miseries, the spiritual Diseases and Infirmities of

' this depraved State, the Necessity of being re-
 ' newed from it ; and of flying to Thee by Faith
 ' and Prayer, as the only Fountain of Life and
 ' Salvation to our Souls. And give me Grace
 ' daily to meditate on the Life and Doctrine of
 ' my dear Lord and Saviour, to propose his Pat-
 ' tern to my Imitation, and to teach my Children
 ' to reform themselves by it : Let no Day pass
 ' without renewing the Dedication of their Souls
 ' to Thee ; and as their Understanding opens, in-
 ' structing them in thy Law ; and explaining to
 ' 'em some Mysteries of thy Love.

' And seeing, O heavenly Father, our Nature
 ' being depraved and prone to Evil, extreme hard
 ' it is, especially for Children, to resist the Tem-
 ' ptations of this naughty World, I beseech Thee,
 ' give me Grace to be vigilant over their Lives
 ' and Conversations ; and to teach 'em to avoid
 ' the Society of such as profane thy Name by
 ' Oaths and Cursings, or indanger their Innocence
 ' and Virtue by any vicious Courses ; that, walk-
 ' ing in the Paths of Virtue, they may grow up
 ' and be confirmed therein.

' Finally, O Lord, because all our Endeavours are
 ' vain and ineffectual without thy Blessing, grant
 ' I beseech Thee, that thy Holy Spirit may accom-
 ' pany my good Instructions, that they may grow
 ' in their Hearts, and spring forth in the Fruits
 ' of an holy Life. Make, I beseech Thee, O Lover
 ' of Souls, my Children thy peculiar Care ; and
 ' while I speak in their Ears, be pleased to illum-
 ' inate their Minds in the Mysteries of thy Love ;
 ' inflame their Hearts with heavenly Desires, and
 ' guide 'em in the Way that leads to everlasting
 ' Life. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be Used by a Child.

MOST Gracious God, and heavenly Father,
 I, thy Child, beseech Thee to give me
 Grace to remember Thee, my Creator, in my
 tender Years; and to sanctify my Soul by an
 early Dedication of my Life to Thee. Sow in
 my Heart the Seeds of Virtue, that I may grow
 in Grace, as I advance in Years.

O Lord, in my tender Years, my Soul is easily
 susceptible of Impressions of Good or Evil; re-
 move therefore, I pray Thee, most Gracious Fa-
 ther, all evil Objects, Dangers, and Temptati-
 ons far from me; and vouchsafe to touch my
 Soul with the illuminating Impressions of thy
 Spirit, that, knowing the End for which I am
 created, I may pursue the same with a constant,
 vigorous, and sincere Endeavour: And since
 we, all of us, receive Impressions not only from
 Thee, but also from one another, let thy All-
 seeing Providence so order and dispose the Cir-
 cumstances of my Life, that I may live among
 such Examples as I may safely follow.

Lord, hear my Prayers for my tender Parents,
 and hear Thou theirs for me, and let thy Blef-
 sing descend upon us all, in Answer to our
 Prayers for one another: let not my carnal
 Birth make me forget my noble Nature, and
 high Vocation; but make me, O Lord, to know
 that I, though now a Native in a Land of Sin
 and Trouble, am yet of a divine, heavenly
 Origin, thy Child, and Heir of thy Kingdom.
 Raise my Desires from this fading State of
 Things, up towards Heaven, that there where
 my Treasure is, my Heart may also be. Let the
 Sense

' Sense of my excellent Nature and glorious Hope
 ' incite me to be vigilant of my Actions and Behaviour,
 ' and continually to claim the Guidance
 ' of thy holy Spirit, that I may understand and
 ' do what is acceptable in thy Sight.

' Give me, O Lord, an early Relish of Grace
 ' and Virtue, that I may know what is good and
 ' acceptable unto Thee by natural Instinct. Teach
 ' me to seek and value all good Examples, and
 ' industriously to shun all idle Company, that
 ' may not now, in my tender Years, by contracting
 ' bad Habits and naughty Customs, deflower
 ' the Image of Grace and Virtue; nor make Way
 ' for Repentance at an Age when the Habits and
 ' Dispositions of my Soul will be stubborn and inflexible.

' Inspire me, I pray Thee, with Modesty and
 ' Simplicity, Humility and Respect, Diligence
 ' and Obedience, that I may daily increase in Fellowship
 ' with Thee, and with all that love Thee,
 ' and vouchsafe to discipline my Soul, O Father
 ' with thy Correction, as thy Wisdom sees fittest
 ' for me, that I may be rooted in Christian Grace
 ' and, experiencing the Vanity of earthly Comforts
 ' and Enjoyments, may desire and seek after
 ' those solid heavenly Delights, prepared for
 ' them that love Thee. *Amen.*

Another Prayer.

O Blessed God, from the Fountain of whom
 ' Grace every good Gift descends, and who
 ' in the Riches of thy Mercy, hast vouchsafed to
 ' comfort me, poor depraved Creature, who
 ' in Misery and Darkness, with the reviving Hope
 ' of Light and Glory. Blessed, for ever Blessed
 ' be thy Name, for so infinite a Mercy: O let thy
 ' Hopes of the revealed and promised Glory, in

site me to prepare my Heart for its Enjoyment,
 by Purity and Repentance: To which End, I be-
 seech Thee, inspire me with a constant Sense of
 my degenerate and unworthy State, and of thy
 great and amazing Love and Condescension in
 finding out Means to raise me from it; and di-
 pose me to receive every salutary Truth, as a
 Dispensation of thy Grace made to convert my
 Soul, and to conduct me in the Way of Peace,
 and to esteem it as a bright Ray of thy glorious
 Sun, darted on my Mind, to enlighten and warm
 it with thy Love: And vouchsafe, O gracious
 Father, to prepare my Heart to receive it with
 Docility and Submission, Humility, and a ready
 Obedience, that I may never cause it to return
 to Thee, with Tidings of a hard impenitent
 Heart.

Especially, O Lord, teach me to receive thy
 holy Scriptures, that glorious Light, hung out to
 conduct us in our Way to Heaven, with the
 utmost Joy and Love, Obedience and Humility,
 Gratitude and Submission; and to seek to these
 holy Oracles for Instruction, to know both my
 self and Thee; my own Vileness, and the inex-
 haustible Riches of thy Goodness; both what I
 am, and the Way to become such as I ought to
 be: Teach me to propose the Perfection of my
 Soul, and then to pursue it by the properest
 Methods, and continually to have Recourse to
 Thee by Prayer, for a Blessing on all the Means
 of Holiness thy Goodness has ordained. Give
 me, O Lord, a Spirit of Discernment to distin-
 guish between true Piety, and the Means thereto,
 that I may practise these, in order to attain the
 other.

O let me never so dangerously mistake my Du-
 ty and Happiness, as to content my self with an
 external Conformity to thy Laws, while I neg-
 lect

lest the inward Purity of Heart, as did the Phari-
 sees; but grant me to be exact in all exterior
 Duties, walking blameless in every Ordinance of
 Religion; doing whatsoever Thou commandest
 and leaving undone whatsoever Thou forbid-
 dest; but chiefly to labour after the interna-
 Righteousness, a just and charitable Soul, a
 humble and sober Mind, and a meek and tender
 Heart: Make me diligent in perfecting my Vir-
 tues; and continually to set before me thy Ex-
 ample, that so I may daily approach to a nearer
 Resemblance of thy divine Pattern.

And since the Corruption of my Heart, in-
 clines me continually to Evil; Give me Grace
 to resist it by Vigilance and Prayer; and to a-
 void, by Humility, Retirement, and religious
 Fear, every Temptation to Sin; that, practising
 the Discipline of Holiness and Virtue, I may at
 last attain it, to the Glory of thy Name, and the
 Salvation of my own Soul, through Jesus Christ
 Amen.

F I N I S.

